

What is claimed is:

1. A damper comprising;
 - (a) a housing including a cavity formed therein;
 - (b) a first member disposed in said cavity and movable in said cavity;
 - (c) a second member disposed in said cavity;
 - (d) an intermediate member between the first and second members, the first member being in frictional engagement with the intermediate member; and
 - (e) at least one magnetic field generator mounted to magnetically couple the first and second members thereby maintaining the first member in frictional engagement with the intermediate member and wherein the first member is movable against the intermediate member to generate a damping force.
2. The damper as claimed in claim 1 wherein the second member is movable.
3. The damper as claimed in claim 1 wherein the second member is stationary.
4. The damper as claimed in claim 2 wherein the second member follows the movement of the first member.
5. The damper as claimed in claim 1 wherein the first member comprises a first seat, the at least one magnetic field generator being supported in the first seat, the first member further comprising a keeper to maintain the at least one magnetic field generator in the first seat.

6. The damper as claimed in claim 5 wherein the at least one magnetic field generator of the first member is comprised of a plurality of permanent magnets.
7. The damper as claimed in claim 5 wherein the second member comprises a second seat, the at least one magnetic field generator also being supported in the second seat, the second member further comprising a second keeper to maintain the at least one magnetic field generator in the second seat.
8. The damper as claimed in claim 7 wherein the at least one magnetic field generator of the second member is comprised of a plurality of permanent magnets.
9. The damper as claimed in claim 1 wherein the housing is comprised of a tubular member having a wall defining an inner housing surface with means for supporting the intermediate member provided along the inner housing surface, the housing further comprising first and second end cap members.
10. The damper as claimed in claim 9 wherein the means for supporting the intermediate member are comprised of opposed longitudinally extending slots.
11. The damper as claimed in claim 1 wherein the second member is fixed and the intermediate member is fixed to the first member.

12. The damper as claimed in claim 1 wherein the friction damper includes a friction layer between the intermediate member and the first member.
13. The damper as claimed in claim 12 wherein the friction layer comprises a plurality of ribs.
14. The damper as claimed in claim 11 wherein the second member is supported by the housing wall.
15. A friction damper comprising:
- (a) a housing including a cavity formed therein;
 - (b) a first member disposed in said cavity and movable in said cavity;
 - (c) a second member disposed in said cavity and movable in said cavity;
 - (d) an intermediate member between the first and second members, the first member being in frictional engagement with the intermediate member; and at least one magnetic field generator mounted to magnetically couple the first and second members thereby maintaining the first member in frictional engagement with the intermediate member and wherein the first member is movable against the intermediate member to generate a damping force.
16. The friction damper as claimed in claim 15 wherein the first and second members are aligned.

17. The friction damper as claimed in claim 1 wherein the second member moves in response to movement of the first member.

18. The friction damper as claimed in claim 17 wherein the second member lags behind the first member when the first member is initially displaced.

19. A damper comprising;

(a) a first member;

(b) a second member;

(c) an intermediate member between the first and second members, the first member being in frictional engagement with the intermediate member; and

at least one magnetic field generator mounted to magnetically couple the first and second members thereby maintaining the first member in frictional engagement with the intermediate member and wherein the first member is movable against the intermediate member to generate a damping force; and

(d) means for preventing displacement of the intermediate member.

20. The damper as claimed in claim 19 wherein the intermediate has opposed ends, the means for preventing displacement of the intermediate member being attached to the ends.